

Message Text

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43

ACTION AF-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 RSC-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-02 PRS-01 FDRE-00

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P 241655Z OCT 74

FM AMEMBASSY BAMAKO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 135

INFO AMEMBASSY NIAMEY PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY

USIA WASHDC PRIORITY

UNCLAS BAMAKO 3725

PARIS ALSO FOR AMBASSADOR HECK

USIA FOR VOA, IPS, IAA

E O 11652 N A

TAGS: SREF, ML, NG

SUBJ: MALI OFFICIAL DAILY RESPONDS TO "LE SAHEL" ARTICLE

REF: NIAMEY 3544, OCT 23; NIAMEY 3567, OCT 24

1. IN RARE EDITORIAL OFFICIAL DAILY

L'ESSOR TODAY

RESPONDED TO CRITICISM OCT 21 LE SAHEL ARTICLE ON
PRIVILEGED MALIAN REFUGEES IN NIGER. FRONT PAGE COMMENTARY
ENTITLED "AFTER GENOCIDE, NOW IT'S PRIVILEGES" BEGINS WITH
PROUD DEFENSE GOM RESPONSE TO DROUGHT EMERGENCY. AFTER
QUOTING CHARGES FROM LE SAHEL, L'ESSOR STATES: THE VEHEMENCE
OF ITS ATTACKS...MUST SURPRISE OTHERS, AND EVEN THEIR OWN
AUTHORS...BUT NOT US MALIANS...SUCH A CAPACITY FOR REVERSING
THE SITUATION OF THOUSANDS OF PERSONS WHO HAVE LOST
EVERYTHING AND WHOSE STEPS HAVE BEEN GUIDED BY THE FATE
OF A NATURAL DISASTER TOWARD A COUNTRY THEY PERHAPS
WOULD NEVER HAVE VISITED* GIVING DRINK TO THE THIRSTY,
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FOOD TO THE HUNGRY...WITHOUT REGARD TO COLOR OR

DIALECT IS AND HAS ALWAYS BEEN THE MALIAN CREED.

2. PERHAPS IT IS NORMAL, STATES L'ESSOR, FOR THE SAHEL TO THINK THAT THOSE WHO RECEIVE WATER, FOOD AND WORK ARE PRIVILEGED ONLY BECAUSE THEY COME FROM THE OTHER SIDE OF AN ARTIFICIAL FRONTIER. WHOSE FAULT IS IT THAT THE LAGARET 2 CAMP IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN MANY NIGERIEN VILLAGES? TRUCKS AND PLANES HAVE BEEN SENT TO BRING BACK THE MALIANS, MISSIONS HAVE GONE TO NIAMEY TO ASSURE THEIR RETURN, MESSAGES HAVE BEEN SENT. BUT THE RESULT HAS ONLY BEEN NIGER'S REFUSAL. THIS REFUSAL IS BASED ON WHAT WE BELIEVE TO BE A PASSING MISUNDERSTANDING. THAT IS WHY IT IS TO BE HOPED THAT OUR FEARS WILL NOT BE CONFIRMED AND THAT OUR COLLEAGUE'S ANTI-AFRICAN ARTICLE IS NOTHING MORE THAN A MISUNDERSTANDING.

3. L'ESSOR CONCLUDES BY SAYING: DELIBERATELY CREATING FALSE PROBLEMS FOR POLITICAL ENDS WOULD BE A TRULY REGRETTABLE AND IRRESPONSIBLE ACT. MALI AND NIGER ARE ON THE SAME SHIP, KNOWN AS UNDER-DEVELOPMENT, DROUGHT, LAND-LOCKED, ETC., SAILING TOWARD HOPES THAT ARE THE LIPTAKO-GOURMA AUTHORITY, THE CEAO, THE IMPROVEMENT IN THE QUALITY OF LIFE. A FEW KILOS OF SORGHUM OR OF POWDERED MILK...DISTRIBUTED TO A FEW THOUSAND DEPRIVED PERSONS, SERENE AND PROUD, SHOULD NOT MAKE US FORGET THE HOPES OF MILLIONS OF MEN. IN THE NAME OF "AFRICANITE" AND SOLIDARITY.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, REFUGEES, ECONOMIC CONDITIONS, DROUGHTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 24 OCT 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974BAMAKO03725
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740305-0707
From: BAMAKO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741021/aaaaarms.tel
Line Count: 89
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: NIAMEY 3544, OCT 23; NIAMEY 3567, OC, T 24
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: cunninfx
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22 APR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <22 APR 2002 by chappeld>; APPROVED <10 FEB 2003 by cunninfx>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MALI OFFICIAL DAILY RESPONDS TO "LE SAHEL" ARTICLE
TAGS: SREF, ML, NG
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005